

U.S. Department of Education
2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) ☒ Elementary ☐ Middle ☐ High ☐ K-12 ☐ Other
☐ Charter ☒ Title I ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Mike Wood

Official School Name: Sagebrush Elementary School

School Mailing Address:
1685 Hillpond Drive
P.O. Box 919
Sheridan, WY 82801-2113

County: Sheridan State School Code Number*: 1702010

Telephone: (307) 672-9059 Fax: (307) 674-6138

Web site/URL: http://www.scsd2.com E-mail: mike.wood@scsd2.com

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Craig Dougherty

District Name: Sheridan County School District #2 Tel: (307) 674-7405

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Richard Bridger

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.
6. The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- | | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 5 | Elementary schools |
| | Middle schools |
| 2 | Junior high schools |
| 2 | High schools |
| 1 | Other |
| 10 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 11937

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 12646

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- ☐ Urban or large central city
☐ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
☐ Suburban
☒ Small city or town in a rural area
☐ Rural

4. 7 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

 If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK			0	7			0
K	39	32	71	8			0
1	28	21	49	9			0
2	32	29	61	10			0
3	26	29	55	11			0
4	40	24	64	12			0
5	28	28	56	Other			0
6			0				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							356

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
2 % Asian
0 % Black or African American
4 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
91 % White
% Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 15 %

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	28
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	26
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	54
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	355
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.152
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	15.211

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %

Total number limited English proficient 1

Number of languages represented: 1

Specify languages:

We currently have a family that is originally from Pakistan. Their first grade student's home language is Urdu.

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 40 %

Total number students who qualify: 131

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

Our district does utilize the above method for calculating free and reduced meals. The numbers above are a snap-shot taken on October 1st. The Sagebrush community has numerous families who work construction and in the oil/methane fields. During the spring, summer, and early fall these people put in long hours receiving overtime money. Around mid October - through the end of February many of these same families are struggling from paycheck to paycheck working few hours. Our free and reduced count increases significantly after October 1st.

10. Students receiving special education services: 16 %

Total Number of Students Served: 58

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>6</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>30</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>3</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>19</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>10</u>	<u>20</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>15</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>
Total number	<u>33</u>	<u>41</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 12 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Daily student attendance	95%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	92%	93%	92%	92%	92%
Teacher turnover rate	7%	9%	0%	6%	3%

Please provide all explanations below.

At Sagebrush Elementary we have experienced the misfortune of teachers with medical problems. We have dealt with two cases of breast cancer. One of the teachers passed away in November of 2006. She did the best she could to stay at Sagebrush until her final days, helping our school community to understand the death and grieving process. This proved to be a multi-year battle. We currently have another instructor with breast cancer. In addition to cancer we have had a several other teachers with major medical issues; and then last year, a fourth grade teacher had emergency heart surgery. As a team we have endured significant misfortune in the area of health. However, these illnesses and deaths have helped to strenghten our team and to unite us as family. ** It is imperative to note that our district does not have data to accurately calculate the 2003-2004 teacher attendance. The number provided above for the 2003-04 school year (92%) is an approximation.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

Graduating class size	0	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0	%
Enrolled in a community college	0	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	0	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total	100	%

PART III - SUMMARY

Sagebrush Elementary School, which opened in the fall of 1986, has grown from a small neighborhood school to the largest elementary school in Sheridan, Wyoming. It educates an economically diverse population of approximately 360 Kindergarten through fifth grade students. Upon entering our school, one feels welcome in a greatly supportive atmosphere, where students enjoy learning and each child's individual learning needs are valued. Our halls are filled with student work, positive affirmations from all staff members, and pictures of Sagebrush kids engaged in learning.

Sagebrush Elementary guides students to explore, to learn, to achieve, and to care in a safe and supportive environment. This mission statement drives education for all students by each and every staff member. We believe all students will learn given time and opportunity that is focused on academic standards and high expectations.

At Sagebrush, high expectations prevail for the entire student body. These standards include closely monitored academic achievement, responsible behavior, leadership, and respect toward all individuals. Many programs are in place to nurture the attainment of our goals. Besides the core academic subjects, Sagebrush offers instruction in art, general music, physical education, piano keyboarding, orchestra, and technology. Leadership opportunities are provided through operating a school store, by older students mentoring younger students, and also by participation in student council. Our students meet the rigorous challenges set before them with help from our after-school program, independent study, enrichment classes, social skills programs, and various Title I, special education, and highly trained paraprofessional personnel.

Our dedicated staff regularly engages in self-directed staff development designed according to student needs and directly correlated with our school improvement goals. Weekly grade level/professional development meetings are held to analyze data, differentiate instruction, and plan appropriate intervention to ensure academic success by all. A steady improvement of academic achievement scores over the years in the areas of reading, writing, and math encourages the continued dedication of staff and students.

Parents are also an integral part of our Sagebrush community success story. Our P.T.O. organizes yearly fundraisers to benefit the students and offers book fairs, a "Bingo for Books" night, and read-a-thons to promote literacy standards. They also provide volunteers at numerous school functions such as our end-of-the-year Community Health Awareness Day. Teachers and parents are truly partners as they collaborate monthly to discuss the enhancement of student learning at Sagebrush.

Community is also a partner in the education of our students. The community Grandparent Program provides daily reading buddies, tutoring, and mentoring for our Sagebrush students. Our community's performing arts theater provides cultural awareness with programs offered each year to develop an understanding and enjoyment of the arts. Grants and community involvement provide programs for guest speakers, specialized science labs and field trips related to social science standards.

Sagebrush Elementary continues to strive for excellence and to celebrate school successes. We are proud of our students and their achievements.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Data presented represents five years of state assessment information from 2004-2008. In 2004 and 2005, the statewide assessment was administered by Measured Progress and was called the Wyoming Comprehensive Assessment System (WyCAS). WyCAS was often considered the most rigorous statewide assessment in the country since it correlated so tightly with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). During this time frame the State of Wyoming measured reading, writing, and math, but only at 4th grade. For the past three years, the state has assessed grades 3-8 and 11, as required by No Child Left Behind using a new assessment system called the Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students (PAWS).

It is difficult to summarize trend data when there has been a change in assessment instruments. But whether it is WyCAS or now PAWS, Sagebrush Elementary has shown a very positive slope in improving the achievement of all students. Math proficiency is particularly strong at Sagebrush. In spring 2007, all three grade levels (3rd - 5th) had over 92% of students proficient and/or advanced in a school where nearly 40% qualify for free and reduced lunch, 15% are highly transient, and another 16% are special education students. In 2008, two grade levels again achieved above a 97% proficiency rating.

Reading results have also increased dramatically. If you study a cohort of third graders as they become fourth graders, and then fifth graders you find tremendous value-added growth. In 2004, Sagebrush reading results indicated students performing in the 46% range; this being a quality score in the state of Wyoming. Two years later, through data driven instruction, Sagebrush proficiency ratings jumped to the low-60s and mid-70s across the three grade levels. The 2007 and 2008 school years depict proficiency levels in the range of a low 81.6% to a high of 98.3% for the three grade levels.

What is perhaps most striking about these five years of data is the close relationship of Title I student proficiency relative to all students. Third grade math students in the subgroup of Title I achieved a 97% and 100% proficiency rating during the 06-07 and 07-08 school years. During 07-08 our fourth grade Title I students achieved 93% proficiency in both reading and mathematics. Over the past five years, Sagebrush has also focused upon closing the achievement gap between special education students and all students. Fourth grade results are perhaps the best indicators of success. In 2003-04 zero percent of Sagebrush special education students achieved proficiency. Data indicates a steady improvement for special education students at Sagebrush. Currently, at the fourth grade level, we have 89% of the students meeting proficiency in mathematics and 100% in the area of reading. In the category of socio-economically disadvantaged students, Sagebrush has consistently been above the 80% proficiency range during the past two school years.

Comparatively, Sagebrush does quite well for a site so dramatically impacted by the high percentage of at-risk students. Among the five elementary schools in Sheridan, Sagebrush has the second highest percentage of free and reduced lunch students, but ranks highest in ordinal rankings. During the past three years, Sagebrush has had the highest number of first and second place finishes among our five schools, including two that are not Title I sites. Overall, Sagebrush assessment results show a very high rate of achievement for all children. This significant growth in student achievement is a testament to the drive and dedication of Sagebrush teachers. We now score among the highest elementary schools in Wyoming, while having a large free/reduced lunch, transient, and special education population.

*Information pertaining to the Wyoming state assessment system: <http://www.k12.wy.us/SAA/Paws/index.asp>

2. Using Assessment Results:

Over the past five years, Sagebrush has focused closely upon improving student achievement. Our School Improvement Goals and staff development activities are directly correlated to improving literacy and mathematic theory and instruction. Two years ago, Sagebrush joined the Partnership for Comprehensive Literacy (PCL). Our staff development model is a type of professional learning community. Therefore, in our district it is the expectation that faculty have weekly grade level meetings to review and track student progress. At Sagebrush Elementary all teams also collaborate additional times each week discussing best practice teaching and learning. Sagebrush teachers use formative assessments on a continuous basis. One of several examples is the utilization of Running Records to track student gains. We also use the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests. The MAP tests are used twice a year – once in the fall for diagnostic purposes, and once in the spring to gauge yearly growth.

The Sagebrush faculty uses the statewide PAWS results for public accountability purposes. It is these results that are reported to the local school board, as well as local media outlets. In addition, Sagebrush triangulates test data using formative assessment, semi-annual MAP test results, and the annual statewide accountability testing. The Sagebrush team has a focused purpose in helping all students achieve. It is a matter of teamwork and school pride for Sagebrush to be the top performing school in this district, and among the top performers in all of Wyoming.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Sagebrush Elementary does a particularly good job in communicating assessment results to various constituency groups in the community. Sagebrush was among the first school to transition from a rather traditional report card with A's, B's, and C's, to a standards-based report card where all coursework is rated in terms of proficiency status (Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic). We were also the advocates for adding pluses and minuses to the proficient rating, because proficient represented what historically parents knew to be B's and C's. This report card system is now spread throughout the district and parents have become more conversant about standards-based achievement reporting. Sagebrush Elementary has also been a leader in helping parents and students understand the MAP results that are reported as Rausch units (RIT) scores. RIT scores are very useful for teachers' diagnostic information and for gauging their "value-added" for each student. Now, parents and students are getting more acquainted with RIT scores and the notion of growth targets. Many students now are aware of their RIT score and their growth target score. In this way, students become engaged and invested in their own learning.

Sagebrush parents and students are very keyed into what percentage of students reach proficient and/or advanced status on our statewide assessment. This school has never failed to miss an Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) target, but everyone in the school community knows what AYP is and takes pride that Sagebrush has never missed an AYP criterion. Sagebrush has an active Parent Teacher Organization, with a considerable following among various community groups. They have an active volunteer program and everyone in the school community is well aware of the primacy of achievement results for everyone at Sagebrush Elementary.

4. Sharing Success:

Sagebrush is a school that prides itself in sharing success and techniques with other schools. Over the past few years, Sagebrush has hosted and conversed with several schools. Of the five elementary schools in Sheridan, Sagebrush was the first to join the University of Arkansas Balanced Literacy Initiative. Now, due to our sharing, two other schools plan to join this collaborative. Sagebrush will be the first in our district to pilot the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, as well as the companion Leveled Literacy Intervention program. As a Blue Ribbon School, Sagebrush Elementary will share the formative assessment systems, the intervention program for at-risk learners, and our literacy model. As a result of recent PAWS scores, Sagebrush is hosting

faculty from a larger district, Campbell County School District; which is seeking to gain insight into the Sagebrush curriculum and literacy model.

In terms of sharing success with other schools in our area, Sagebrush Elementary will serve as a model for schools in the county and state. Sagebrush has already agreed to host the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) professor when she returns to Sheridan providing on-site coaching and technical assistance for multiple sites. In particular, Sagebrush will be sharing techniques for the Literacy Assessment Wall used to track student progress in reading and writing performance. We will provide opportunities for educators from other schools to observe the Title I program as we use various intervention techniques to ensure all students have quality instruction during Guided Reading.

More broadly, Sagebrush will present the literacy model at the annual Wyoming School Improvement Conference. This conference is jointly hosted by the Wyoming Department of Education and the North Central Association (NCA) accreditation agency. Sagebrush welcomes the opportunity to share openly with all schools and districts.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Our curriculum is based on district and state standards, No Child Left Behind, and our NCA School Improvement goals. These elements influence our instruction, but our focus is on teaching the whole child. According to our mission statement, "The Sagebrush community will guide students to explore, to learn, to achieve, and to care in a safe and supportive environment." The goal of our curriculum is to ensure that all children, regardless of where they are on the learning path, are provided with appropriate opportunities for reaching their highest potential.

The Language Arts curriculum focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening. We use a balanced framework approach emphasizing the gradual release of responsibility. This model focuses on every child becoming a life-long independent problem solver. The Step Up to Writing program provides explicit instruction in organizing personal narrative and expository writing using graphic organizers. This is the foundation of our writing process.

Our Everyday Mathematics Program provides a school wide spiraling curriculum that emphasizes the core strands: Number and Numeration, Operations and Computation, Data and Probability, Measurement, Geometry, Patterns, Functions and Algebra. This core program is supplemented by Math Recovery and enhanced through staff development in the Add+Vantage Mathematics and Count Me in Too instructional framework. Exemplars supplement the core program by providing additional real world problem solving opportunities to students. This curriculum is structured to provide multiple exposures to topics and frequent opportunities for learners to review and practice skills and strategies.

The MacMillan/McGraw-Hill Science series represents the Wyoming state standards in Earth, Life, and Physical sciences. Through an inquiry-based approach, students develop an understanding of scientific content and the scientific method. This knowledge helps students understand, question, and improve the world around them.

Using the integration of the reading and writing process, our Social Studies curriculum focuses on teaching the five standards: Citizenship/Government/Democracy, Culture/Cultural Diversity, Production/Distribution/Consumption, Time/Continuity/Change, and People/Places/Environments. Our mission is to help young people gain the knowledge and develop the necessary thinking skills to make informed democratic decisions as responsible citizens of our school, community, and world.

Art, general music, choir, orchestra, and piano keyboarding make up our fine and performing arts curriculum. These classes are aligned with national and state standards. In order to reach the whole child, an integrated approach to learning is used to achieve the goals of the sequential and developmentally appropriate instruction. For example, the children often experience cultural lessons relating art, music, and children's literature through cross-curricular activities. In March, the entire school celebrates Read Across America and Music in Our Schools Month with special activities. Our wonderful parent volunteers make these school wide activities possible.

The Sagebrush commitment to the physical well-being of our students begins with a physical education and health curriculum firmly established in the Wyoming State Standards. Content descriptors were determined using researched based models. We developed an age appropriate scope and sequence spanning all grades. Student learning is further enhanced by the commitment of having the equipment, supplies, and technology necessary to run a quality program.

The Sagebrush Coordinated School Health team works to expand physical activity within the school day. The establishment of a mileage-walking program, the incorporation of a bully-proofing program, and the development of a community based health fair all work together helping to maintain a healthier Sagebrush school community.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

Sagebrush first began implementing a balanced literacy framework model eleven years ago. Within the past four years, our use of a data driven assessment wall based on the Partnership for Comprehensive Literacy Model caused us to reevaluate whether or not our instruction was supported by research based best practices. After school-wide reflection, we began to link together our literacy curriculum, high quality literacy standards, and children's literacy development to implement research based best practices.

We determined a more structured time on task was needed in the areas of guided reading and literature circles. Therefore, instead of having Title One students pulled from their classroom environment, we placed Title One educators within classrooms. By placing these high quality instructors in each classroom during guided reading and literature circles, every child is actively engaged in the reading and writing process for thirty minutes, five days a week. Teachers provide additional reading group time as needed based upon assessment results. Additional literacy components within our balanced literacy framework include shared reading, reading aloud, and independent reading.

In addition, we implemented the Comprehensive Intervention Model, based on Response to Intervention, which provides a tiered approach. Our highly trained Reading Recovery teachers have become our Title One intervention teachers who focus on the three tiers of intervention within each grade level.

The Assessment Wall provides a visual representation of reading levels for all students. Weekly grade level meetings, including intervention specialists, are centered on the discussion of research based best practices along with determining the appropriate tier of intervention for any struggling reader.

Over the past three years, our assessments (Developmental Reading Assessment and Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment) indicate that the majority of students are making reading gains through ever increasing levels of text that require higher levels of comprehension.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Since its adoption at Sagebrush, Everyday Mathematics has provided a well-balanced and rigorous foundation for instruction that supports success and achievement in math for all students. Developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project and approved by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), this program presents and develops concepts and skills using a continuing spiral, both within each grade level, and throughout our K-5 setting.

The full range of math strands are introduced and explored, developed and practiced, reviewed and assessed through varied applications. One might likely see algebraic concepts being explored in kindergarten as well as in fifth grade. Development of data and probability concepts take place as regularly in third grade as in first. The information, materials, and manipulatives along with extensive professional development provide teachers with a foundation to support differentiation in instruction.

While computation skills and fact fluency are continuously developed, this curriculum places primary emphasis on mathematical thinking, reasoning, and on the communication skills necessary to acquire and develop critical thinking.

Classroom instruction includes: direct instruction and discourse, exploration activities, math games for varied size groups, small group re-teaching and enrichment, and graphic references for terms and procedures. Many of our instructors are trained in ‘Count Me in Too’ and ‘Add+Vantage Math’ companion programs which offer enhanced conceptual development of the theoretical foundations. In addition, many of our staff members are trained in Exemplars, a problem-solving approach that complements Everyday Mathematics. With Everyday Mathematics as our core curriculum and the extensive professional knowledge held by our staff, we are truly able to prepare every student with the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for their success in mathematics.

4. Instructional Methods:

Sagebrush Elementary is committed to helping all students reach their highest potential through research-based instructional methods. On-going formative and summative assessments are administered to guide and scaffold instruction. This instruction is differentiated for diverse subgroups including special needs students, Title I, and gifted participants.

Our balanced literacy focus provides instruction using the gradual release of responsibility model which helps students to become self regulating learners. Classroom teachers use a guided reading model where students are in small flexible groups according to their individual reading levels. Sagebrush teachers know the importance of the reciprocity between reading and writing and incorporate both into each daily lesson. This is supplemented by “flooding” each K-5 classroom with additional highly-qualified teachers and paraprofessionals who are trained in our literacy model. Three Reading Recovery teachers serve the most at-risk first grade students, as well as provide booster groups to at-risk students in all other grade levels.

In the area of mathematics, classroom teachers provide whole group instruction followed by supplemental support by highly-qualified teachers and paraprofessionals to meet the needs of individual students. Many teachers have additional instructional training in Count Me in Too and Add+Vantage Mathematics. These teachers and specialists work together to provide additional small group instruction focusing on higher levels of math thinking/reasoning skills, meeting individual student needs. Math Recovery instruction is provided for the most at-risk first grade students.

For students who do not show adequate growth in the regular classroom, our response to intervention plan ensures that students are receiving additional one-on-one/small group explicit instruction by a highly qualified teacher. This intense instruction is data driven and goal oriented.

Since we are a data driven school that focuses upon best practice instructional methods, as well as a multi-level intervention process, we believe every child has the opportunity for specific differentiated instruction.

5. Professional Development:

Professional development is an integral part of Sheridan County School District #2 and Sagebrush Elementary. After looking at the triangulated assessment results and our school-wide goals, staff development is formulated into our school improvement goals.

Many Sagebrush teachers have attended national conferences about Professional Learning Communities and the Partnership for Comprehensive Literacy Model, which we have implemented school-wide. Teachers continuously seek professional development opportunities that strengthen their instructional skills. Teachers attend conferences, workshops, and classes, and then share and model what they learned with other staff members.

Sagebrush teachers actively participate during district in-service days, which are in addition to student contact days, to enrich our professional learning community. We use the newly acquired knowledge from these days to strengthen our practice and to network with other schools.

Working with our district, Dr. Barbara Schubert, a national level literacy consultant conducted non-bias evaluations of our Reading Recovery Program, Title I services, and classroom instruction. Dr. Schubert continues to provide Sagebrush with on-going staff development, moving toward more effective literacy instruction and learning. In addition, Dr. Schubert provides monthly training for our instructional facilitators and coaches.

Teachers and specialists at each grade level meet weekly with the Literacy Coordinator to share resources that are working and to discuss interventions for all children. We also read and discuss professional literature pertaining to our improvement goals.

Each new teacher attends additional training and is assigned a mentor teacher. They meet regularly with their mentor teacher, as well as our literacy coordinator and coaches in order to ease their transition into our school district and to make their classroom practices more effective. At Sagebrush, our paraprofessionals and volunteers also receive continuous training in the reading, writing, and mathematic processes through workshops and demonstrations to enhance their effectiveness with students.

6. School Leadership:

The leadership style at Sagebrush Elementary is based upon a strong belief in the shared decision making process. We work closely with each family seeking to ensure strong relationships in order to enhance each student's educational experience. Parents are asked to actively participate in our parent/teacher organization, helping guide policy and program decisions at our building site and district level.

We utilize the explicit training and strengths of each professional within our building to enhance our levels of awareness, thus enabling the team make the best possible decisions for all students. At each grade level teachers, specialists, and paraprofessionals reflect upon data driven results to make best practice decisions that are horizontally and vertically aligned. We also include our social worker and nurse to ensure all (whole child) perspectives are being effectively recognized.

Sagebrush works cooperatively with our central administration; which provides excellent vision, leadership, and the necessary resources to be highly successful. To ensure the success of our site level team, we utilize the expertise and guidance of literacy and math coordinators, as well as instructional facilitators/coaches. Partnering with the coordinators and coaches to facilitate instructional and learning leadership, the principal employs a supportive leadership style. Working together, these curriculum leaders facilitate professional development, conduct active research, disaggregate data, and guide our team. The principal, through a firm belief of respecting and honoring children, ensures and maintains a positive learning environment for all students and a fantastic culture for our entire school community.

In closing, the professionals at Sagebrush focus upon the 'little things' ensuring that all students are successful. At the end of each day we are critically reflective. We evaluate our effectiveness and then make the necessary adjustments to ensure students are socially and academically successful. The leadership role has truly become the responsibility of all staff members.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: PAWS (Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students)

Edition/Publication Year: 2008 Publisher: Harcourt

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	97	98	78		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	39	73	22		
Number of students tested	61	59	58		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	96	95	75		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	35	67	18		
Number of students tested	26	21	28		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Title I					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	100	97	66		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	29	61	3		
Number of students tested	14	31	29		
4. (specify subgroup): Special Education					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	92	80	67		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	8	40	25		
Number of students tested	13	5	12		

Notes:

The Wyoming state assessment did not test third grade students prior to the 2005-2006 school year.

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: PAWS (Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students) 2005-2008

Edition/Publication Year: 2008 Publisher: Harcourt

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	82	90	67		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	21	41	10		
Number of students tested	61	59	58		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	81	86	72		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	15	43	4		
Number of students tested	26	21	28		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Title I					
% 'Meeting' plus 'Exceeding' state standards	71	81	52		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	7	10	0		
Number of students tested	14	31	29		
4. (specify subgroup): Special Education					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	62	80	33		
% 'Exceeding' state standards					
Number of students tested	13	5	12		

Notes:

The Wyoming state assessment did not test third grade students prior to the 2005-2006 school year.

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: WyCAS 2003-2005 & PAWS 2005-2008
Edition/Publication Year: 2008 Publisher: Measured Progress and Harcourt

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	97	92	90	41	60
% 'Exceeding' state standards	49	36	20	7	17
Number of students tested	59	62	40	58	54
Percent of total students tested	95	98	100	97	97
Number of students alternatively assessed					2
Percent of students alternatively assessed					100
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	95	95	75	28	50
% 'Exceeding' state standards	52	33	0	0	9
Number of students tested	21	21	12	29	22
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Title I					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	93	87	83	19	29
% 'Exceeding' state standards	43	20	11	0	0
Number of students tested	14	30	18	16	14
4. (specify subgroup): Special Education					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	89	100	85	29	0
% 'Exceeding' state standards	33	18	23	0	0
Number of students tested	9	11	13	14	7

Notes:

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: WyCAS 2003-2005 & PAWS 2005-2008
Edition/Publication Year: 2008 Publisher: Measured Progress and Harcourt

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	98	82	63	47	46
% 'Exceeding' state standards	48	29	15	14	22
Number of students tested	59	62	40	58	54
Percent of total students tested	95	98	100	97	97
Number of students alternatively assessed					2
Percent of students alternatively assessed					100
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	95	95	33	34	50
% 'Exceeding' state standards	48	19	8	10	9
Number of students tested	21	21	12	29	22
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Title I					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	93	70	50	25	14
% 'Exceeding' state standards	21	13	6	0	0
Number of students tested	14	30	18	16	14
4. (specify subgroup): Special Education					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	100	100	23	21	0
% 'Exceeding' state standards	22	18	0	0	0
Number of students tested	9	11	13	14	7

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: PAWS (Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students)
Edition/Publication Year: 2008 Publisher: Harcourt

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	92	98	86		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	30	37	17		
Number of students tested	60	43	59		
Percent of total students tested	94	94	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	80	100	83		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	30	20	10		
Number of students tested	20	15	29		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Title I					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	67	83	78		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	8	0	0		
Number of students tested	12	12	18		
4. (specify subgroup): Special Education					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	50	100	88		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	0	22	19		
Number of students tested	10	9	16		

Notes:

The Wyoming state assessment did not test fifth grade students prior to the 2005-2006 school year.

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: PAWS (Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students) 2005-2008

Edition/Publication Year: 2008 Publisher: Harcourt

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr		
SCHOOL SCORES					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	87	86	76		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	28	26	24		
Number of students tested	60	43	59		
Percent of total students tested	94	94	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	85	80	69		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	20	13	21		
Number of students tested	20	15	29		
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup):					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. (specify subgroup): Title I					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	58	67	44		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	8	0	6		
Number of students tested	12	12	18		
4. (specify subgroup): Special Education					
% 'Meeting' plus % 'Exceeding' state standards	50	78	75		
% 'Exceeding' state standards	0	11	25		
Number of students tested	10	9	16		

Notes:

The Wyoming state assessment did not test students at the fifth grade level prior to the 2005-2006 school year.